

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6326

INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: PROSPECTS FOR DEMIREL'S EFFORT TO FORM GOVERNMENT

REF: ANKARA 7775

1. JUSTICE PARTY (JP) CHAIRMAN SULEYMAN DEMIREL, DESIGNATED BY PRESIDENT KORUTURK ON SEPTEMBER 30 TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT, HAS SEVERAL INITIAL HANDICAPS:

A. HIS PARTY CONTROLS ONLY 148 OF 450 SEATS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. TO MAKE UP DEFICIT OF 78 SEATS NEEDED FOR MAJORITY, JP WOULD NEED SUPPORT OF LEAST DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP - 44 SEATS) AND NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP - 48 SEATS). (PRESUMABLY LARGER REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY WOULD NOT ENTER COALITION LED BY JP.)

B. THERE IS BITTER PERSONAL ANIMOSITY BETWEEN DEMIREL AND LEADERS OF DP, AS FAILURE OF PREVIOUS EFFORTS TO BRING TWO PARTIES TOGETHER HAS SHOWN.

C. DURING RECENT CYPRUS CRISIS DEMIREL LOST POPULARITY FOR NOT HAVING INTERVENED IN 1967 CYPRUS CRISIS, WHICH OCCURRED DURING HIS PREMIERSHIP, AND FOR CRITICIZING ECEVIT'S
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HANDLING OF CYPRUS PROBLEM.

2. WITH THESE HANDICAPS, DEMIREL WOULD SEEM HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF FORMING COALITION UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, HE MAY HAVE TWO OTHER OPTIONS:

A. HE COULD AGREE TO LET ANOTHER MEMBER OF HIS PARTY HEAD COALITION OF RIGHTIST PARTIES. THIS APPROACH TO UNIFYING RIGHTIST STRENGTH HAS LONG BEEN FAVORED BY MANY MEMBERS OF DP AND SOME DISSIDENT MEMBERS OF JP. HOWEVER, DEMIREL SO FAR HAS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED IT.

B. HE COULD SEEK PROMISE FROM DP AND NSP TO GIVE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE TO JP MINORITY GOVERNMENT. AT VARIOUS TIMES IN PAST, HOWEVER, DEMIREL HAS EXPRESSED UNWILLINGNESS TO HEAD GOVERNMENT WITHOUT STRONG MAJORITY SUPPORT.

3. AS ANOTHER OPTION, DEMIREL MAY PREFER SIMPLY TO GO THROUGH MOTIONS OF ATTEMPTING TO FORM GOVERNMENT, THEN ASK TO BE RELEASED FROM THAT DUTY. HE THUS WOULD PRESERVE PARTY'S OPPOSITION STATUS AND FREEDOM TO CRITICIZE DURING TIME WHEN ACCORDING TO VIEW PREVALENT AMONG MANY TURKISH POLITICIANS, TO HOLD POWER WILL MEAN GETTING BLAMED FOR GROWING ACCUMULATION OF HARD-TO-SOLVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

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